Reviewer's report

Title: Ultrasound Evaluation of the Abductor Hallucis Muscle: Reliability Study

Version: 3 Date: 25 July 2008

Reviewer: Scott Wearing

Reviewer's report:

RE: Ultrasound evaluation of the Abductor Hallucis Muscle: Reliability Study

Thank you for the opportunity to review the amended manuscript. The authors have responded to the majority of the points raised, however, several points still remain unaddressed.

1. I remain confused regarding the use of the term ‘95% confidence interval’ (page 8, para 3 & Page 9, para 1). It is difficult to see how a 95% confidence interval of 1.27 can equate to upper and lower limits of agreement of 2.44 and -2.54. It would appear that the standard deviation of the difference rather than the 95%CI has been reported.

2. While the authors have provided the between-session bias, the numbers cited for the bias and limits of agreement for both the mediolateral width and dorso-plantar thickness (Figures 4 & 5) do not ‘add up’.

Page 9, Para 1

3. The upper and lower limits of agreement cited within the text still do not match those in Figure 5.

Page 10, Para 1,

4. As indicated in the original review, References 24 and 27 (formerly ref 23 & 26) are cited inappropriately and should be deleted as these statistical references do not comment on protocols of previous US work.

Page 15.

5. The title of Ref 32 (formerly 31) is still cited incorrectly

6. The year of publication of Ref 28 (formerly 27) has not been corrected.

Figures 1-3.

7. These figures indicate that 3 focal points (as demonstrated by the white arrows) were employed during US imaging. Ideally, the focal points should be positioned such that they correspond with the region of interest. However, in Figures 1-3, the focal points are positioned superficial to the muscle. Either more appropriate figures should be used or some comment regarding use of focal points is warranted.
In addition, there are a few minor typographical errors:
Page 7, para 2, line 7
‘researcher’ rather than ‘researchers’
Page 7, para 3, line 1
‘obtained’ is unduly repeated
Page 8, para 3, line 4
Consider deleting ‘was reported’
Page 9, Para 3.
‘Width and thickness’ rather than ‘width and length’ to maintain consistency
Page 11, para 1, line 14
Philip or Philips?

**Level of interest:** An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

**Quality of written English:** Needs some language corrections before being published

**Statistical review:** Yes, but I do not feel adequately qualified to assess the statistics.

**Declaration of competing interests:**

I declare that I have no competing interests